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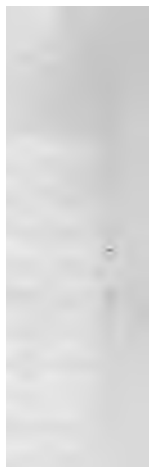
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W. H. Jones

Your Duty and Mine.

J. E. Philipps.





YOUR DUTY AND MINE.

DUTIES OF WIVES AND HUSBANDS,

CHILDREN AND PARENTS,

SERVANTS AND MASTERS.

BY

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I HAVE placed these Duties in the order in which Holy Scripture places them. May God in His mercy be pleased to bless this attempt to set forth what I believe He requires of the various members of Christ's Body.

To

WIVES and HUSBANDS,
CHILDREN and PARENTS,
SERVANTS and MASTERS,

I inscribe this Book,

J. E. PHILIPPS.

Christmas, 1865.

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CHAPTER I.

WIVES AND HUSBANDS.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church¹."

As Holy Scripture places the duties of Wives first in all three of the Epistles in which the duties of wives and husbands are particularly mentioned, namely, that to the Ephesians, Colossians, and the First Epistle of St. Peter, I shall begin by speaking of them; and may Christ, in His great mercy, bless what I shall say to the increased happiness of many of our households.

Love is, as a holy man says, the primal duty in both, the basis of all; but one special form this is to take in the case of the wife (as is distinctly to be gathered from those three Epistles I have just named), is *submission* and *reverence*.

¹ Eph. v. 22. 25.

Thrice are this submission and this obedience spoken of.

“Wives, *submit* yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” “Wives, *submit* yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.” “Ye wives, be *in subjection* to your own husbands.”

And this submission is not to be partial, limited to certain things—obedience in some things and not in others—but it is to be universal. It is to be submission in all things lawful. “As the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in *every thing*.” You see the important, deep, mysterious matter this subjection is—the husband’s headship is compared to that of Christ. As Christ is the Head of the Church, so the husband is the head of the wife. The wife is to obey her husband as beholding in him Christ’s representative; for what else can those strong, emphatic words mean, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands *as unto the Lord?*” Obey him, as being Christ’s Vicegerent to you. You may hear, as it were, Christ’s voice speaking to you through your husband! Yes, God claims of wives perfect obedience to their husbands. The wife is as much bound to obey her husband as the Church is bound to obey

Christ's laws. The husband stands to the wife in exactly the same relationship as that in which Christ stands to the Church. What a solemn, important thing holy Matrimony must be, to be able to bring about and establish so grand a relationship—placing two children of Adam in the position which Christ and His Church occupy one towards the other. The submission of the wife to the husband is to be co-extensive with that of the Church to its Divine Lord. It is to be undeviating, unfaltering, exact obedience. And with this submission is to be united *reverence*. It is written "Let the wife see that she reverence her husband." It is not to be the extorted, wrung-out obedience of a slave, but the obedience of a dutiful, affectionate, respectful child. The character, and worth, and talents of her husband may be such as naturally to inspire reverence; but the reverence is not to be a reverence arising out of such adventitious circumstances, but is to be reverence for him *as her husband*. She is to reverence her husband, not because he is straightforward, upright, honest; not because he has intellectual power; not because others reverence him; but simply because he is her husband. The reverence is to be independent of all these external circumstances. She is to reverence him although

others should see nothing in him to command their reverence. She is to reverence him because he is her God-appointed head.

Sarah, Abraham's consort, is the pattern Holy Scripture holds up to wives. St. Peter refers wives to the character of Sarah. Although entitled by the Almighty Himself "Princess of God" (for so the change of her name from Sarai to Sarah seems to signify), although the mistress of more than 300 servants, she called her husband "lord." "Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, after I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

This submission to and reverence for their husbands was, St. Peter says, the decoration of the holy women of old: "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." "Wives," says a learned modern writer, "become like to Sarah by obedience."

Their authority rests on their subjection to their husbands. They become like Sarah, whose name signifies princess, by calling their husbands "lord."

Yes ; the true power of woman is in gentle submission. Holy Scripture invests woman with true dignity and grace. God knows the place He designed for woman in the great human family ; and her highest wisdom is to keep as near as may be in that place. Her highest happiness lies in filling the position God intended her to fill. St. Peter, in addition to the virtues of submission and reverence, speaks of meekness and quietness of spirit, and plainness in dress. Both these, wives and all women should study. "A meek and quiet spirit." That requires no explanation. Its meaning is at once patent to all. It is not that we know it from its frequency ; but not one of us but prizes it most highly when he meets with it. We are not surprised to hear God values it ; that He reckons it as worth a great deal. Nothing is so uncomely in a wife as a discomposed, disconcerted spirit, one which is put out of tune by every trifle, and is always looking out for causes for disquiet. A fretting, complaining spirit is utterly destructive of all fireside bliss. The greatest number of things that vex us, do so, not from their own nature and weight, but from the unsettledness of our minds. A meek and quiet spirit is unmoved by petty affronts and by trifling annoyances. It bears patiently the burden

of its cares. St. Peter does not here prohibit graceful apparel suitable to the station of the wearer, but exhorts women in the first place to attend to *the dress of the heart*. Attend first to that, and you will then *never* err as to the dress of the body. Care not for vain outward ornaments, but cherish the highest and richest ornament of woman, "a meek and quiet spirit." This never goes out of fashion in the Church of Christ. This never wears out, for it is not corruptible. This ornament the soul puts not off at death, but carries with it to the eternal world, where it shall shine in its full lustre.

Where the wife (as is sometimes the case) acts as the head of the family, and not the husband, this is not God's order, and so His full blessing cannot in such cases be looked for. We should try in all things to follow God's order, to bow implicitly to His revealed will.

From what St. Paul says of the wives or deacons, and also of those widows who were to be considered worthy of admission into the Church's recognized number of widows, we may gather what the duties of ALL wives should be; for the wives of God's ministers should be model wives; and these widows of whom St. Paul speaks had been doubtless the wives of men in various classes of society.

Of the wives of deacons, it is said, "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."

And the character of widows worthy of being taken into the Church's number is this. "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well-reported of for good works; if she have brought up children; if she have lodged strangers; if she have washed the saints' feet; if she have relieved the afflicted; if she have diligently followed every good work."

The Apostle records God's censure on those women who wander about from house to house, and are tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things they ought not.

I have now gathered for you out of Holy Scripture some of the chief duties of wives; let us pass to those of husbands. Their duties are equally plainly set down.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." "Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself."

Again,—“Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.” “Ye husbands, dwell

with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered."

Love and honour are due from the husband to the wife. He is to regard her as what she is—his dearest and nearest relation. For her he has (so God wills it) left those bound to him by the closest ties of blood, even father and mother, sister and brother. She, by God's ordering, has become nearer to him than all these. She is *one with him*, even as Christ is one with His Church. Adam, our first father, announced a great and mysterious truth, applicable to Christ's connexion with His Church, and also applicable to all wedded life, to every pair to the end of time united by God, to all marriage in the Lord. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

The Son of God left His Heavenly Father; and He also left His earthly mother, the Jewish synagogue, and took to Him a Church from all nations.

Therefore the Church is exhorted by the

Psalmist to forget her own people and her father's house, and to follow Christ. In the right and holy relation of man to woman in marriage, God laid the foundations of society. As lovers of our country, as well as members of Christ's Church, we should be most jealous of any legislative *relaxation* of the marriage laws. Better *tighten* than loosen these. Better make more restrictions than do away with one which God's word imposes.

For a man, then, to love his wife, it is to love *himself*! He who loves not his wife, is not worthy even of the name of a man, much less of a Christian, "for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it."

And not only is the man to love his wife, but he is to show her all honour, "giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel," as being one of a more delicate and fragile structure than himself. The man is to be his wife's protector and defender. He is to put honour on her in the presence of others, to show her all respect. He is studiously to cover any defects she may possess, and, instead of blazoning abroad her faults, to throw a veil over them.

He is to avoid all jars, quarrels, and contentions, for fear they should find it impossible to pray together, "and as being heirs together of the

grace of life; that their prayers be not hindered." For, besides private prayer and family prayer, there should always be the united daily prayer *of a man and his wife*; a prayer that they may have grace faithfully to observe and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made, and also for a blessing on their offspring, if God has bestowed on them the blessed gift of children. The contentions of man and wife, railing and wrangling, so embitter their spirits as to render them exceedingly unfit for prayer. They cast a damp upon their prayer, and clog its wings.

Hard and angry words put charity to flight, and without the presence of charity, prayer might as well remain un-offered up. It cannot rise to God's Throne, except on the wings of faith and love. How can that husband and wife send up united prayer, who dwell not in perfect peace one with another? Oh see that your prayers be not hindered.

It is prayer together that sweetens all. Prayer that sanctifies and blesses all we do.

There is no sacrifice, moreover, a man ought not to be willing to make for the good of his wife. For the Church, Christ gave Himself. For the salvation of His spouse,—the Church,—Christ laid down His life. He longed for its purity and freedom from all stain. He

desired to see on it no spot, no wrinkle, no blemish. The husband should long heartily for his wife's growth in grace, that she may become perfected in holiness. He should see that she has the opportunity of attending upon all religious ordinances. How indifferent, alas, are some husbands amongst our poorer brethren on this point. They are regular at Church themselves, but make no provision for their wife to take her turn at public prayer and at God's altar. They are content to leave her, Sunday after Sunday, to attend to the household duties, to mind the children, instead of arranging some plan whereby to set her occasionally free to refresh her soul in the sanctuary of God. This is selfishness; it is not following the care of Jesus for His Church. And do not many need that admonition "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them?" Be not bitter against them. Do not magnify your wife's faults, do not easily take offence, do not cherish any unkind feelings towards her, do not harden yourself against her. If she has offended you, be ready to meet her more than half way. Run to meet her, as the father in the parable ran to meet his most undutiful son. Even a heathen wrote in old time, "It evinces weakness of mind when men are bitter against their wives."

Ye husbands and wives are pledged by your marriage vows to help and comfort one another in every possible way: whether Fortune smiles or frowns, you are equally *to stand by one another*. Till death, you are to love and to cherish one another. Naught but death is to separate you two; and even then, you may look for re-union in the kingdom of your God, if so be God's grace has sanctified your whole married life. At the time of your marriage, or on the very first opportunity after your marriage, we hope you received together that Sacrament which binds us together in one communion and fellowship in Christ's mystical body. Continually should husbands and wives kneel together at the table of the Lord and refresh their souls with that Body and Blood which is the food of immortality. If one of you is a Communicant and the other not, oh! rest not until you have brought your husband or your wife to that feast of blessing. Labour to make your life-partner a partaker of that joy—for such it is to those who with a penitent heart and lively faith approach those holy mysteries. And to united prayer and united Communion add united reading of God's Holy Word daily. Together read a portion of that Book of Books which giveth understanding unto the simple and

points out to us the way wherein to walk. It were indeed good to study together the chart of life, to consider together the best way of crossing the wilderness and reaching the heavenly Canaan. "What human words," says an ancient father of the Church, "can suffice to express the felicity of that marriage which the Church knits together, the Holy Eucharist confirms, and the Benediction seals; which angels announce in heaven, and the Father of all ratifies. How blessed is the yoke of such a pair, joined together by one hope, by common vows, common discipline, common service. They are like brother and sister in Christ, fellow-servants of God, joined together in body and mind. Truly, they twain are one flesh. They pray together, fast together, they are together in the Church of God, and are together at the Banquet of God. Psalms and hymns sound between them. Christ sees and hears these things and rejoices, and sends to them His peace."

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, and show them all reverence. Husbands, love your wives and pay them all honour.

On the anniversary of your wedding day, read over the Service for Holy Matrimony together, pray together, and, if possible, partake of Holy

Communion together, so shall ye ripen together for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Repent of your past failures in the full keeping of your marriage vows. Find out what ground you have here for penitence. Pray earnestly for grace and strength to pay for the future that which you have vowed. Your marriage vow was registered in heaven.

God married you. He brought your wife or your husband to you, even as He brought Eve to Adam. He, in His all-wise Providence, found you your partner.

Seek ye then to please Him, both in body and in soul.

CHAPTER II.

CHILDREN.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord : for this is right. Honour thy father and mother ; which is the first commandment with promise ; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth *.”

It is of the duties of children to their parents, or to those who stand to them for a time in the place of parents, either as guardians or as teachers, that I am now to speak.

And what I shall say will apply not merely to those under age, to those *in statu pupillari*, but more or less to all of us, to all who now know or have experienced a parent's care for us. “The duties of children” will be found to concern all of us, although in some cases it will be a looking back, a retrospective glance, at duties once ours—left more or less unfulfilled.

The first duty of children is *obedience*—a strict, unhesitating, unfaltering obedience. There is to be an instant, cheerful compliance with your parents' wishes. Their will is to be paramount.

* Eph. vi. 1—3.

It is to over-ride your own wishes and inclinations. What they command you, you are to do. What they say, is to be to you law. This is clearly the teaching of the Bible. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right;" and so in the Epistle to the Colossians, "Children, obey your parents *in all things*, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord." God sets your parents over you, and through them it is He speaks to you. Their commands are in a sense His commands. Their directions to you, His. Is there, then, no limitation to parental authority? The command to pay them obedience in every thing must, we cannot doubt for one moment, go on the charitable supposition that they will order you to do nothing unreasonable and nothing contrary to the revealed will of your Father in heaven. Where the command of your earthly father clashes with that of your heavenly Father, there can be no question which you are to obey. The Apostolic rule enunciated at a very early period of the Church's history is one binding on all "followers of Christ." "We ought to obey God rather than men;" and there is something higher, and holier, and more constraining even than a father's and a mother's love; "for," said Jesus, "he that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."

God's commands and Christ's love take precedence of all else. Nothing, however urgent, is to interfere with these. But in all other cases a father's and mother's wishes are to be obeyed. Mark well the wide space over which Holy Scripture makes the commands of parents to extend. "Children, obey your parents in all things." You may not choose some points in which you will pay them a ready obedience, and reject others. You must be willing to give up your will in all things to theirs. In your pursuits, both of business and of pleasure, you are to follow those which have their sanction and approval. They are to have a veto on the books you read, the company you keep, the trade or profession you choose, the partner you select for wedded life. In all these cases it is God's will that you should fall in with their wishes, and be ever very cautious of thinking your own case an exception for some reason to this rule. There are, of course, some exceptions; but do not too hastily conclude yours to be one of these.

Those who go in great matters against their parents' wishes, generally live to rue it. They bitterly lament their want of filial submission. Keep as close as possible to the command, "obey your parents in all things," and do not

suppose for one moment that either marriage or your attaining to the age of twenty-one sets you wholly free from this your filial obligation, for it is not so. Our father's or mother's rights over us, although lessened by our coming of age or marriage, are not thereby cancelled. Ever they remain in some degree in force ; never does this authority over us, I believe, altogether cease. They have as regards us, in many respects, their position of father and mother to the end.

What strict obedience and cheerful submission of the Holy Child Jesus to the Virgin and Joseph, in His Nazareth home, do those few words express ; " He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them !"

And the grace which obedience to parental authority imparts is set before us in the Book of the Proverbs ; " My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

And this obedience required of you, includes in it all reverence and respect, and the providing, if so be they need it at your hands, for their maintenance.

Our Church Catechism well explains what is the keeping of the fifth commandment in those few words so strikingly expressive of what our

duty is, "To love, honour, and succour my father and mother." Ham, through want of respect for his father Noah, brought God's curse on all his posterity. Many a one has groaned in slavery for Ham's grievous sin. Absalom's bad heart is in nothing more exemplified than in the contempt in which he held up his father's conduct to the view of Israel. "When any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him and said . . . see thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed of the King to hear thee."

Notice, on the other hand, King Solomon's respect for his mother³. "Bathsheba therefore went unto King Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah, and the King rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the King's mother; and she sat on his right hand."

And as regards the duty of children to assist in the support of their parents if they stand in need of their assistance, the whole teaching of Holy Scripture sets it forth. The excuse that that with which they might have assisted their parents was dedicated to God, was not held by our Saviour to be a valid one. They pleaded

³ 1 Kings ii. 19.

“Corban,” it is a gift to God’s Treasury, we have nothing left. What we had to give, we have already given. Christ told them they abrogated God’s commands through such vain traditions. The support of parents was the first duty. It was not in ordinary cases to be put aside for that of any other.

The providing a home for His Virgin Mother, was almost the last thought of Jesus on the cross. He settled where she was to live before He left this earth; and found for her one who should be to her in the stead of a son. “Behold,” said He to S. John, “thy mother!” and from that hour the Virgin and Christ’s dearest apostle dwelt in one common home.

The honouring of parents. Oh there is much included in that word honour! He who honours his parents, studiously avoids publishing to the world their infirmities and defects. He hides as much as he can their inconsistencies and shortcomings; he keeps from the world’s idle gaze what might bring his parents into contempt. Their cause he feels is his. He cannot wholly separate his lot from theirs. What they are, he in a measure is. He cannot cut through entirely the knot which binds him to them. He knows that his and their interests are bound up in the same bundle. Nothing but death can wholly separate

them; and death itself shall not sever this blessed relationship amongst the just.

Frightful, brethren, in this our generation, are the disobedience and the disrespect shown to parents. It is the crying sin of the age. Children, especially of the poor, as soon as they can earn enough to maintain themselves (it matters not how young they may be), too commonly instantly throw off all filial obligations. They look on their duties to their parents as ceasing with their dependance on them. They hold in contempt the blessed tie of father and son, of child and mother. Mere lads, and young girls, live careless about their parents' wishes! Is not this statement of the condition of things far too true? Do not many parents give up in despair the further training and care of their children, because they find them to be utterly undutiful? "Disobedience to Parents" was to be one of the miseries of those times of coming peril of which S. Paul foretold his son-in-the-faith Timothy.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents." How many, alas! are wholly wanting in respect to those whom they are bound to honour above all others.

They are all courtesy and respect to others ; to their father and mother their manner is insolent and contemptuous ! They speak to them as some wrongly speak to those greatly their inferiors. They show them no honour. Oh bad sign of the times ! May the honour of parents revive in this our land. He who helps to bring in this blessed change, is the truest patriot. This is the best way of reforming society. This is to begin at the right end. This is to begin to repair the edifice of society where it most needs reparation. Establish the honour of parents, and you have reached the root of vices, and have more than half cut them through ! Sometimes a man who carefully provides for his wife and children is not ashamed to let his aged father or mother lie within a workhouse walls. He does not recognize their strong claim to a portion of his earnings. Yet what a claim have they on our love and care ! What trouble have they in our early years undergone on our behalf. They cared for us when no others did. How have they borne with our fretfulness and waywardness. How have they stinted themselves in many cases, in order that we might not want. What a pride they took in watching our growth and opening faculties. How was our life (as Judah said of Joseph's life with that of his father)

bound up with their life. When the world frowned perhaps on us, they still smiled on us, and believed in our goodness. And a poor return they have met with ! Instead of soothing and alleviating the infirmities of their old age, you let them pine in loneliness, uncheered by the smile of affection and the sympathy of love ! Heavy, I believe, will be their punishment, who thus or in any other way cast off their parents. They have a right to the very best we have. They are the very last to be shut out from participation "in our basket and our store;" neglect of father or of mother never fails to bring along with it a curse.

And our parents' spiritual well-being, as well as their bodily, should be a care to us. If, unhappily, they should be ungodly, we must labour in prayer with God for them. To save our parent's soul should be the thing nearest to our heart. To attain this, nothing should be left untried. Example, words, and prayer are mighty engines of salvation. Not unfrequently children have come to Christ, and their parents have followed after. Never despair of gaining a parent's soul. God may, and does oftentimes signally bless a child's endeavours after such an end.

I have mentioned now some of the chief duties

of children to parents. How has it been with you? Have you failed in the fulfilment of these duties? Have you been a wayward, undutiful, rebellious son? Did you help to bring down your father's hoary head with sorrow to the grave? If so, repent, and with bitterness of soul bewail this grievous sin. Seek, through the Blood of Jesus, cleansing from it. Wash in that Fountain which has been opened for sin of every kind. Wash, and be clean. By respect and reverence for the aged and those in authority, show your true penitence for the great wrong you did your parents.

And in your case, whose parents are still living, by great and painstaking care of them for the future, show how true your sorrow is for your past neglect. Spend on them much time and thought. Love, honour, and succour them to the utmost of your power. Show them every consideration. Treat them with all tenderness.

And if God has given you pious and godly parents, it is a gift for which you can never thank your God enough. As God visits the sins of fathers on their children, so we must believe blessings flow down through godly parents on their children. The child of godly parents stands, as it were, on vantage ground; he has a store of

prayers in heaven and the magnet of bright examples to draw him on. He has helps which others lack. If he perish, it can only be through his own grievous fault, his obstinate hard-heartedness.

Honour your parents, for the promise annexed to this duty in the first Dispensation has never been recalled. S. Paul mentions it as existing still. The promise has now less in it of earth, and more of heaven; but it has in it of both. "Godliness," and especially this duty, "has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

Honour your parents, and you will find God smiles on you, and gives you peace.

CHAPTER III.

PARENTS.

"Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord⁴."

"THE duties of parents,"—a most weighty and important matter, for on the right and faithful discharge of these duties depends, in a very great degree, the happiness of the whole world. If parents are slack and remiss about their duties, great misery is sure to arise. All other rule is built up upon parental rule. Parents come nearer to us than any. They are the first to care for us, and to govern us. What our present character is, is owing greatly to our parents, or to those who stood to us in the place of parents. The duties of parents, then, of which I am about to speak, will include the duties of all natural or appointed guardians also, and of all who have been to us in any respect in the stead of parents. The duties of parents are the duties likewise of all those who are in any way

⁴ Eph. vi. 4.

concerned or employed in the bringing up of children—the training and education of our sons and daughters. In the word “Fathers” the mothers are included. The fathers are alone mentioned, as being the fountains of domestic rule.

All will allow that one of the first duties of parents is to provide a proper maintenance for their children ; to see that, as far as in them lies, they have suitable food and clothing, that they are brought up according to their rank and place in life ; for it is a solemn and imperative duty on all, to see that through no self-indulgence, nor sloth, nor negligence in business, our children are pinched in the necessities of life. We are bound to be sparing and economical in the gratification of our own tastes and pleasures for our children’s sake. For instance, a man has no business to spend money on a picture or a pleasure excursion whilst his child is stinted in its education. A man grievously sins against his child, who spends in beer what should have gone to furnish him with food and raiment. Our children are to be our first care to us. We are to provide all things necessary for their well-being. It is due to them, to prevent them from falling into a lower class of society than that into which they were born. We are bound to

maintain them, as far as may be, in that position of life in which God's Providence has placed them. On their account we may not be reckless or profuse in our expenditure. We may not entertain friends and show great hospitality at the expense of our children. Their interests are always to be the first thought of—ever the first in our calculations. We must take care, however, not to defraud either the poor or God's Church of their rightful shares. That would do our children no good; that would not make our barrel of meal and cruse of oil last the longer. To rob God, is always bad economy. Judicious and abundant almsgiving hurts no man's family. A father's charity, exercised with due discretion and care, never yet brought damage to a child. And next to this duty of maintenance, which we put first because, unless the life God gives is nourished, the discharge of no other duty is possible, comes that of teaching them God's revealed will? We have God's witness that Abraham taught his children this. "For I know him, that he will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." We may believe that that was NOT the FIRST gathering together for instruction of his twelve sons by Jacob on his death-bed. The

Book of Deuteronomy is full of directions about the teaching of children by their parents. Parents are at all times and in all places to be endeavouring to instil God's truth into their children. In their sittings at home, and in their walks, in the morning and in the evening, they are to seize every opportunity of making their children acquainted with God's precepts.

Joel begins his prophecy by announcing that, not the adult population alone, but the children are to be made acquainted with it. "Tell ye your children of it." At a very early age indeed, you should begin to speak to your little ones about their Heavenly Father and their loving Saviour. It is extraordinary how readily infant minds drink in such teaching—what appreciation there is in them, beyond their years, of spiritual things. They deserve careful and pains-taking teaching. Eunice instructed her son at an early age in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Thanks to her careful teaching it was, that he so readily embraced the Gospel when he heard it at the mouth of the Apostle S. Paul. To her teaching he thus owed his rise to be the first Bishop of the Ephesians. And it would seem most probable, from the way in which she is mentioned, that Lois, his grandmother, was a joint instructor with his mother in the teaching

of God's revealed will to the child Timothy, the son of a Gentile father. These two faithful women laboured for their child ; and their labour was not in vain. "From a child" writes S. Paul to this chief pastor, "thou hast known the Holy Scriptures."

And although we are bound to send our children to school, if we have not time and leisure to instruct them ourselves, nothing can wholly compensate for a parent's teaching. We must also teach them when they are at home from school. . And as to education, let me say we are bound to give our children the very best education we can. A thoroughly good Christian education is the best legacy we can bequeath them.

And our little ones must be brought to Christ in Holy Baptism. It is the only way in which they can accept in infancy Christ's gracious invitation to come unto Him ; and it is a blessed way, for they are thus engrafted into Christ. Oh neglect not the baptism of your little ones. Moses was in danger of death at God's hands, because he neglected for a while the circumcision of his infant son. "The Lord met him, and sought to kill him." Oh rejoice, ye parents, that ye can thus place your lambs in the arms of the Good Shepherd. And next, ye

are to see that they receive an increase of grace through the right reception of the ordinance of confirmation.

After Baptism, has followed, even from the very first beginning of the Church, the "laying on of hands." S. Paul names it among the first six rudiments of Christianity; the six first principles of the faith of a Christian man. You will find them in the beginning of the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

And as soon as your children are confirmed, exhort them to become at once partakers of Holy Communion. Don't hold them back, as I know some parents do. Don't tell them they are "too young." No confirmed person can be too young. See also that your children know some prayers, and that they say them regularly. As they grow older, teach them how to enlarge and amplify their prayers. Take them sometimes to pray with you. It is a blessed recollection to have of a departed mother, that one has knelt with her in private prayer.

Twice a day, at least, should earnest prayer ascend for each individual child,—the name of each should pass our lips,—for each one, according to their several wants and needs, should a special prayer go up. Earnest should be our pleadings with God for those whom He has

given us. Job remembered, in his burnt offerings, all his ten children.

Monica, the mother of the great S. Augustine, was a wonderful instance of long-continued prayer for the conversion of a son. S. Augustine was a man of dissolute life, and had fallen into grievous heresies. "Almost nine years passed, in which," says he, "I wallowed in the mire of that deep pit, and the darkness of falsehood, all which time that chaste, godly, and sober widow, now more cheered with hope, yet no whit relaxing in her weeping and mourning, ceased not at all hours of her devotions to bewail my case unto Thee; and her prayers entered into Thy presence."

"Thou, O God, sentest thine hand from above, and drewest my soul out of that profound darkness; my mother, the faithful one, weeping to Thee for me, more than mothers weep the bodily deaths of their children. For she, by the faith and spirit which she had from Thee, discerned the death wherein I lay, and Thou heardest her, O Lord. Thou heardest her, and despisedst not her tears when streaming down, they watered the ground under her eyes in every place where she prayed; yea, Thou heardest her."

And then, relating the particulars of his con-

version, he says, "Thence we go in to my mother, we tell her ; she rejoiceth ; we relate in order how it took place ; she leaps for joy, and triumpheth, and blesseth Thee."

Never was there a more remarkable instance of a mother's persevering prayers rewarded. Great encouragement, in truth, to praying mothers !

Of 120 students in America preparing for the ministry, it was ascertained that no fewer than 100 had pious mothers—no fewer than 100 had been blessed by a mother's prayers, and directed by a mother's counsels to the Saviour. Rehoboam, the son of earth's wisest man, had probably been a far different man to what he proved himself—a very fool—had he not had Naamah, an Ammonitess, and, in all probability, an idolatress, for his mother. The gods of the Ammonites are specified among those which Solomon worshipped. "We may hear (says an able writer on Holy Scripture) of foolish sons having wise fathers, and of foolish fathers having wise sons, but rarely of a wise son having had a foolish mother."

King Lemuel, of whom we hear in the last chapter of the Proverbs, and by whom (some suppose) is meant King Solomon, was instructed by his mother.

Oh ! go on, ye fathers and mothers, praying

for your children, although your prayers appear as yet as if thrown away, wasted. There is One Who treasures them up, and Who will one day send you an answer of peace: only pray on; be not faint-hearted, persevere. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Pray, pray on! Also hesitate not to correct your children's faults. Eli did not punish his two sons enough. He spoke to them about their sins, but seems not to have taken vigorous measures to restrain them in their licentious course. Punish your children, but never while you are hot with passion. Wait till you are calm and collected. Then you will know how to apportion the punishment to the offence; how far the fault was accidental or wilful; a new fault, and one which found your child off its guard, or a fault oft repeated. To spoil a child, is to sin. Correction, when it is just and called for, shows true love. "He that spareth his rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes;" and, again, "Chasten thy son, while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." We must expect that our children will stand in need of correction; for as Holy Scripture says, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."

And there is a blessed promise as to the result of seasonable and proper chastisement: "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul."


But one great thing for us to guard against is the not irritating our children; the not irritating them by vexatious commands, by unreasonable blame, by uncertain temper. St. Paul, speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, lays great stress on this point. It is that which he specially singles out, in speaking of the duties of parents,—“Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.” And so again in Col. iii., “Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.” We must then take care not to place causes of irritation as stumbling-blocks in our children’s paths. We must carefully avoid making them contentious, stirring them up to strive with us. Instead of provoking them to wrath, we are to do our utmost to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The nurture here seems to refer to the discipline of the body, the admonition to that of the soul, by exhortation, by word of mouth. And note that word “discouraged;” sad to crush a child’s spirit, sad to damp its desires after good, sad to check its feeble strivings after right; sad to cause it to give over its earnest

endeavours to please our God and us. And, oh ! never love one child above the rest. At once check yourself if ever tempted to this sin. If you do doat on one above the rest, you will probably one day rue your folly and smart for it, as Jacob did. His over-fondness for Joseph gave him many a heart-ache. It, moreover, well-nigh cost Joseph his life. It is cruelty to a child to place it higher than its brothers and sisters in your affections. What St Paul says to Timothy respecting Presbyters of the Church applies to you and your children,—“Observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.” Parents should try to be most thoroughly impartial.

What the character of the children of those who are thought worthy of being admitted to the priesthood, is to be, that you should aim at making the character of your children “faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly.” Children would be far better than they are, if parents bestowed more care and pains on them. Every bough of a young tree can be bent : the case of an old tree is hopeless.

Our chiefest aim and endeavour should be to get our children to love our Saviour.

His Life, and Death, and Passion should be vividly set before them from their earliest years.



They should be taught His claim to them, and the need they stand in of His atoning blood. The vanity of this world should be constantly pointed out to them, and eternity's reality. Watch narrowly the sins to which your little ones seem most disposed, and endeavour to nip them in the bud. Not to do this, is to neglect your children. Oh ! weighty responsibility, to be a parent, to have to answer for each child's soul ; and be well assured that example tells on children more than precept

Be yourselves whatever you would have your children be ! Children, as a rule (there are exceptions), grow like their parents. Young children, at least, copy (oh, how closely !) those they meet with. They imitate what they see. They speak what they hear. Let them then have patterns of temperance, sobriety, and holiness before their eyes. Daily besiege God's Throne with prayers for them. Be your prayer that of the dying Israel for his loved Joseph's sons,—“ The God which fed me all my life long unto this day, and which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.”

CHAPTER IV.

SERVANTS.

“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh ; not with *eye-service*, as men-pleasers ; but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men ; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance : for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done : and there is no respect of persons⁵.”

Few, if indeed any, in ancient times occupied exactly the same position as modern servants. Slavery almost universally prevailed. Man brought into bondage his fellow-man. Every household of any size had its slaves. Thus we find St. Paul, after he has spoken, both in his letter to the Ephesians, and in that to the Colossians, of the duties of wives and husbands, of children and fathers, proceeds next to those of slaves, for so the word in the Geeek translated in our version “servant” means. The slaves were a very large and numerous class. St. Paul never uses any other word than that of “slaves.” St. Peter, on the other hand, in his epistle, writing—*not* as St. Paul wrote in his, to Gentile

⁵ Col. iii. 22—25.

converts,—but to Jewish Christians, makes use of a milder term, and one more answering to our word servant (*οἰκέται*). All, however, that the Holy Ghost spoke by the mouth of His servants to slaves, not only applies (we must believe) to our present servants, but applies to them in a still higher degree; for is it not a great and important thing that Christianity has done for mankind in raising slaves to servants? Was not the Exodus of Israel out of Egyptian thralldom a foreshadowing of what Christ would do for all God's children that wore the yoke. True slavery still exists in *one* nation at least which dubs itself Christian; but it cannot be so for long, for the whole spirit and teaching of the Gospel is opposed to slavery; and although Christianity has ever gone, we see, on the principle of not overthrowing at once any existing national or social institution, every sound sermon that is preached is necessarily a discourse against slavery⁶. The mention of Christ, the deliverer, the purchaser of all, loosens the slaves' bonds, and points to a swiftly-approaching day when his brethren shall regard him as, equally with themselves, one of Christ's freemen. St. Paul knew that Christianity had sounded the death-knell of slavery,

⁶ This was written before the end of the American War and the Abolition of Slavery in the Southern States.

but it was his duty to teach slaves, while they were slaves, a slave's duties, as we find him so remarkably doing in the interesting case of Onesimus and Philemon. The Apostle saw it was his plain duty to send back the run-away slave, whom he had converted to the faith of Christ in Rome, to his master at Colosse. He begged Philemon, however, to receive him back, not as a slave, but "as above a slave, a brother beloved." Christian duties, then, binding on slaves must necessarily be equally binding, if not much more binding, on those who have stronger obligations laid on them to love and to obey their master, Christ. Surely God expects more of you servants than He did of the often cruelly-treated, ground-down slave of old. "To whom much is given, of him shall much be required." From freedmen God looks for more than He did from slaves, and sets before you your duties. Your first duty is "obedience;" on this great stress seems laid. It is put first and foremost in each of four exhortations to servants in the epistles—namely, in that to the Colossians, Ephesians, Titus, and the first epistle of St. Peter,—“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh;” “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in

singleness of your heart as unto Christ." "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things." "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear." This strictly-enjoined obedience goes, of course, on the charitable supposition that masters will do their duty. Their authority is limited by what is lawful and becoming. They are, moreover, not the masters of your souls, or spirits, or consciences. Of these One alone is the Master! If your earthly masters would have you go against your conscience, or do anything whereby your soul would be endangered, you are to obey God rather than men. God does not hand over His supreme rights in such matters to any master. At the bidding of no master are you to change your religion, or to do any act which your conscience pronounces to be wrong. But in all things lawful there is to be strict and implicit obedience: you are to do as you are told. This you say is pleasant and easy enough where the master or mistress is good and gentle; but there are cases where they are quite the opposite to this—namely, where they are what Holy Scripture styles "froward," or, as the word would be better translated, "crooked," of perverse wills and ways, hard, exacting, and unreasonable. What of obedience

to such? Still it is to be paid. St. Peter foresaw this objection, and has answered it. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." Oh, mark those words, "also to the froward!" The Gospel expects a good deal from its professors, but not more—never indeed more—than God gives His children power to yield. They can learn to obey even the froward. They are thankful if God gives them a master or mistress good and gentle; but if He assigns them those who are froward, they should accept it as good discipline, and as bringing into healthy exercise their patience. A froward master is at present the best for them. Yes, God chose your masters for you. Hard masters in the Egypt of this world make His people long more for the heavenly Canaan. Great peace would result to you, I feel sure, from your hearty and ready acceptance of the post, whatever it be God's providence assigns you. Don't go about seeking easier, smoother paths than God intends that you should tread in. Hagar left her mistress, Sarah, on her dealing hardly with her; but God sent her back,—“and the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.” Do not quit a situation because all is not just as you like;

because there are some things in it hard to bear. Quit it, if you find your soul is suffering loss through your having but few opportunities of attending the worship of your Church; none perhaps of receiving the Communion of your Saviour's Body and Blood; but do not quit it merely because your master or mistress is a bad temper, and you have much to put up with. Rather rejoice that in your case patience may thus have her perfect work.

And note, brothers and sisters in Christ, that in two places—namely, in Colossians and Ephesians, St. Paul points out to you that you must take care that the service you render your masters and mistresses is not eye-service—that is, a service rendered only when they are looking on, and present. A slave commonly works only when his master's eye is on him. His back turned, he loiters and plays. A good and faithful servant is as diligent and hard-working when his master is absent as when he is present. Mere eye-service he holds in abhorrence. Let those poor unhappy ones, who aim merely at being men-pleasers, rest satisfied with eye-service. God-pleasers will strive to render a higher and more constant service, knowing that they have always on them the eye of the Great King.

And next to strict obedience and service at

all times, and not merely when the master's eye is on us, comes the due government of the tongue—"not answering again." "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again." There is to be no contradicting of those set over you; no war of words with them; you are to submit with meekness to what they say. A hard, very hard thing for you sometimes to do, but a Christian duty, a thing you must strive to attain to, would you be Christ's true servant. "What glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently; but if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently: this is acceptable with God."

And having mentioned this sin of answering again, St. Paul speaks of the sin of "purloining"—that is, stealing, embezzling, the secretly converting to your own use the goods or money of your master. Much must be always left, especially in large households, to the honesty of servants. Occasions of abusing the confidence reposed in them will not be wanting to them, if so be they are not armed with the bright and beautiful armour of honesty. There is to be the utmost integrity in the smallest matters. There is not to be the very slightest appropriation to their own use of any of their masters' goods.

They are to take nothing as perquisites but what is known and allowed. They are, as St. Paul writes, to show all good fidelity, to act as good and faithful stewards of their masters' goods, being guilty of no waste nor improvidence.

The downward path of dishonesty is a very easy one: once get into it, and it is by no means easy to get out of it. Avoid then the turning aside into it. Let no one succeed in tempting you to the least act of fraud or of injustice. Once give way to the devil, and you may never be able to recover yourself out of his snare. He may lead you captive at his will. O miserable, alarming state! may you never experience it.

Whatever you are, be honest: part not with strict integrity.

And servants are taught to look for no earthly reward in duly fulfilling the duties of their calling, but to have respect to the recompense laid up for them in heaven. There, your every cross, borne patiently for Christ's dear sake, is registered. There, your patience is recorded: your meek endurance under provocation noticed. Christ is one day to give you your reward. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

Christ will one day pay His servants abundant wages ; but we shall lose His wages if we look for reward from any other master. You are to go on doing all you do heartily, as service rendered unto Christ. You are to be diligent in doing, patient in suffering. The meanest work becomes full of honour when done for Christ ; done in the name of Christ, the veriest drudgery becomes work of a high order. It is the object for which it is done, and the motive, which ennobles work. Those who work for Christ cannot be otherwise than nobly employed. Their work is ever honourable, their reward most sure.

Yes ; those are words never to be forgotten, spoken by the Holy Spirit through St. Paul to the slaves of Colosse, "ye serve the Lord Christ." Keep Christ before you, and your work will be done well.

And rejoice, ye servants, that Christ your dear Lord, when He took to Him our nature, and was made flesh, came not as a master, but a servant,—“ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.” And so He says of Himself,—“ The Son of Man came not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many ;” and again, said He

not on the night of His betrayal, "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as He that serveth." Your Lord declares Himself a servant. Shall we wish a higher lot than Christ's? Is it not Christ-like to have any service to perform? Is it not more Christ-like to wait on others, than to be waited on oneself? If we had the choice, ought we not, for our own spiritual good, to prefer the former? Shall we wish to be greater than our Lord?—to occupy a higher place than His? Would you have nothing but kindness and ease, when He had nothing but enmity and trouble?

As that good duke said, when they would have crowned him king of Jerusalem,—“No, by no means. I will not wear a crown of gold, where Jesus was crowned with thorns.”

Oh, servants, ye may surely draw great comfort from the thought of Christ, a servant! Behold Him, your Lord, with basin and towel the last night before His death, performing a servant's part to His twelve Apostles. It is an act of Jesus we should all of us endeavour ever to keep vividly before us. We should, in that case, hasten to wait on one another.

And rise, I pray you, in the morning sufficiently early that you may have a few minutes, at least,

to give to thought about your salvation, and to private prayer, before you enter on your day's work ; and bear in mind that a household assembling for family prayer, does not, cannot dispense with the necessity for private prayer.

Let not the very busiest day pass without reading some portion of God's blessed Word; and never yield to the temptation to take part in any Sunday excursion by railway train or otherwise. "Follow not a multitude to do evil." "When sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Avoid vanity in your dress : love neatness and modest simplicity. Spend not on your dress what you had far better put by for a day of want or sickness.

Check sin in your fellow-servants. Try to influence them for good.

Do not wander about from one place of worship to another. Go nowhere else but to church. Keep stedfastly to your Church.

Give alms. Yes; it is as much your duty as your master's. You may have small wages ; but still reserve something out of them for the poor and destitute, and for Christ's work at home and abroad.

Be careful in choosing your friends. Do not rush into friendships. Select as your companions those who feel a reverence for God, and who are walking in His ways.

And, my brothers and sisters in Christ, you should pray for those set over you. You should daily ask God to bless your masters and mistresses. You have your temptations and trials, and they have theirs. Mind their interests. Naaman owed it to his servants—in the first place to the little Israelitish maid that waited on his wife, and then to those who went with him to the land of Israel, that he got cured of leprosy. Abraham could trust his head-servant to fetch for his son, his wife.

Your master's interests and yours should be regarded by you as identical, one and the same.

If your masters be God-fearing, you should honour them the more. "They that have believing masters," writes St. Paul to Timothy, "let them not despise them because they are brethren; but rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort." Timothy, the Bishop of Ephesus, was not to overlook servants in his exhortations. And mark those words, "partakers of the benefit"—it signifies both servant and master laying hold of the benefit, and bearing it, as it were, between them as the Israelites bore the large cluster of grapes from Eshcol. Each should prove himself a

benefactor to the other; and if your masters should happen now to be indifferent to religion, pray that they may wake up to its great importance. How much would earnest prayer for one another, strengthen and cement all our social ties and relationships! Pray, also, that you may do your duty, both to your earthly and your heavenly Master.

Be in all things obedient.

Answer not again.

Be honest.

Work with all your heart.

Look for your reward from God, not man; and so, if so be ye shall be found trusting in the merits of Him, your Lord, Who came to be a servant, ye shall one day hear those cheering and refreshing words after your life of toil,—

“Well done! good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

Enter Christ's service again, if you should have, alas! deserted it. Cleave to it, if you are still in it.

It is in serving Him, we find our freedom. He alone can knock off from each of us the galling chains of sin, and say, “Be free.” Serve, serve Christ, and you will find all earthly service, however sharp and rigorous, light.

CHAPTER V.

MASTERS.

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven⁷.”

THE rule which we are to follow with our servants is the rule of justice and of equity. We are in no way to take advantage of their position, or to dare to treat them as those who have less protection than ourselves from the eternal laws of right and wrong. We are not, for small pay, to exact from them much work. For what we receive and take from them we are to give them an equivalent. Their wages are to be apportioned to their work; the work being weighed and measured, not merely by its severity and length, but also by the amount of skill required to do it. We are not to expect and to require heavy work for light wages. By paying, moreover, in some cases our servants and labourers better, we should exempt them from the fearful

⁷ Col. iv. 1.

temptations some of them now have to encounter to commit petty acts of dishonesty—to eke out by small frauds their scant maintenance. Trust in God in such dire extremities should be the poor man's resource. No degree of poverty can justify the slightest violation of that great law for all,—“Thou shalt not steal.” All I mean is, that masters should take out of their servants' path as far as possible every stone of stumbling. If we do not give them enough to live and dress on, supposing them unhappily to fall into Satan's snares, are we not sharers in their sin? Shall we come off guiltless?

Giving insufficient wages, is in a master a sin. If you cannot afford to give your servants and labourers what you ought, better at once dismiss some of them. Keep only those with whom you can deal according to the rule of justice and of equity. A man is not obliged to keep servants; a man is not obliged to keep on his farm—a tradesman is not obliged to keep in his employ a number of workmen; but what he is obliged to do, by the law of his God, is to give them every one, yes, man, woman, and child, who work for him, that which is just and equal. He is not to decide by his own fancy what wages to give, but to regulate them by the laws of justice and equity. You never thought it a matter of

religion before what wages you paid! If this is so, I am glad you have learnt this scriptural truth at last. Men are shockingly ignorant of the Bible,—the Bible that is to regulate the wages they pay. I am not forgetting the fact that the rate of wages must depend in a great degree on the law of supply and demand; the number of servants wanting masters, and the number of masters requiring servants; but what I do mean to assert boldly and unhesitatingly is, that however great may be the number of servants needing situations, no Christian householder is to take any undue advantage of this, and offer to man or woman, to boy or girl, what is insufficient for their maintenance. We have no right to offer them what will not provide them with convenient food and clothing. We have no right to expect all their time, and energies, and strength, when we know that what we pay them cannot possibly supply them with the necessaries of life. Be the state of the market as regards labour what it may, we are bound to give those whom we employ—that which is just and equal. Their being willing through sheer necessity to give us their services at a very low rate, is no proof that we should be right in accepting them. Justice and Equity, not their dire needs, are to arrange the contract

we enter into with them. Justice and equity demand likewise that we should see that those whom we employ are properly lodged. Their rooms and dwellings are not to be passed over as things in which we have no concern. Close, confined, crowded, ill-ventilated rooms will hardly come under the terms, "just and equal." Men often, alas! care more about the stables of their horses, than about the comfortable lodgment of their brothers and sisters in Christ. Inquire how your servants and work-people are accommodated; and do your very best to give them fitting accommodation if you desire to do by them that which is just and equal. Provide for their comfort and well-being in every way. Try to put yourself in their place; and be it your endeavour to carry out as regards them the golden rule, "Do to others as you would have others do to you." In sickness tend them; and when their strength fails them, cast not off from you the care of them. The centurion stationed at Capernaum, of whom the Gospel history tells us, bestirred himself to get assistance for his sick servant, even sending an embassy to Jesus to get His aid. We are not to cast off all thought and care of those who have worked for us directly, when through sickness or other infirmity

their work is done. We are to retain a grateful recollection of their past services, if so be they have been faithful.

Our words also, as well as our actions, are to be kind to our servants. Here many fail. They use sharp language to those who wait on them or work for them,—“they shoot out their arrows, even bitter words.” They count harsh, rough words to their servants and work-people as nothing. They scarcely regard it as a sin. They have plenty, it is true, to bear them company. The world does it. Oh! it is indescribably painful, it makes one shudder, to hear the bitter, sharp, cutting way in which some masters and mistresses speak to their servants. You would think, to hear their tone and tongues, that servants were an inferior race of beings, and that they were not, alike with those they serve, purchased with the Blood of Christ, and made in baptism members of Christ's body. Such bitter, reproachful, taunting language was common in the days in which St. Paul lived; and therefore the Holy Ghost says through him in the epistle to the Ephesians, “And ye, masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening.” Forbear from angry, contemptuous, cutting words. And mark the reason the Apostle gives, the same as that in our text,

—"Knowing that your Master (or, as other MSS. have it, 'your and their Master') is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him." Yes; forbear threatening those who are your fellow-servants. There is one and the same Master to you both. He regards not persons, but works. He does not allow one of His servants to abuse and utter words of threatening to a fellow-servant.

There was in the days of the Judges a wealthy land-owner of Bethlehem who was a bright example of one who forbore threatening; and who, on the contrary, was in the habit of opening his mouth to bless his work-people. His name was Boaz. He married Ruth. His salutation to his reapers on his entrance into his harvest-field was, "The Lord be with you." And these words from the great man drew forth from his workmen the fitting response, "The Lord bless thee." Surely we might all do well to take a lesson from Boaz. Would that masters forbore from threatening their men, and met them as did Boaz his work-people, with words of blessing! Men are apt moreover oftentimes to exact far more than they ought from their servants. They are tasked beyond their strength. They are required to be up till late at night and betimes in the morning, and supposed to be able to recruit

their exhausted energies with what we should esteem a very stinted allowance of sleep. Even those who in other respects have a fair claim to the title of good masters and mistresses, are not unfrequently guilty of a great want of consideration for their servants. They require of them what is plainly unreasonable.

A good master will not restrict his labours to the temporal well-being of his servants. He will view them as co-heirs with himself of eternity, and strive hard to promote their spiritual advancement. He will feel that their eternal destiny is in a measure committed to his care. He will ascertain whether each one of his servants, each one he employs, is baptized, confirmed, and a communicant; and he will spare no pains to bring them, if unbaptized, to the Holy Sacrament of Baptism; if unconfirmed, he will exhort them to offer themselves for the Apostolic ordinance of Confirmation; if confirmed and not yet communicants, he will never cease his endeavours to make them feel the privilege of becoming partakers of the Holy Communion. And this supposes that arrangements will be made by masters and mistresses for their servants' attendance at Holy Communion, and that they will not be content with merely allowing them to worship God in the evening, as is too generally, I fear, the case.

A good master will labour hard to impress upon their minds the reality of eternal things, and will seek to win them to the love of Christ. Daily he will read with his household portions of Holy Scripture, and join with them in the blessed work of prayer. The patriarch Abraham took pains with his large household. His 318 servants are spoken of as "trained," or instructed. He trained them in their duty to their God. On this point we have God's testimony. Cornelius also, the centurion at Cesarea, was not only himself a God-fearing man, but his religion reached to his household servants, and beyond them to one at least of his soldiers. He was not satisfied with enjoying religious exercises, and practising works of mercy himself, he did his best to make his servants and his soldiers partakers in his joy. He is described as a "devout man, and one that feared God with all his house." He sent to fetch St. Peter two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually. Soldiers of Christ should be stirred up to greater zeal for the souls of others by the example of this officer of Rome. God viewed him with special favour, and honoured him by singling him out for a separate message from the courts of heaven.

We have striking instances in the Bible of

certain ones in high position who had the wisdom not to be offended at advice offered by their servants, and who, acting on the advice offered, found it greatly to their advantage. They were her servants who persuaded Abigail to take measures for appeasing the anger of the warrior David when treated with scorn and insolence by her churlish husband. Had it not been for his servant's sound advice, Naaman had driven back to Damascus as miserable a leper as he came into the land of Israel.

His servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?"

David appears to have been particular as to the character of his household. We read in the Psalms: "He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. Whoso leadeth a godly life, he shall be my servant."

The only way to keep a family orderly is to make God the master, according to that good old proverb—"When God is made the master of a family, He orders the disorderly." If God's mastership over both master and servant is not recognized, there can be no real and lasting order. Confusion and anarchy, strife, and rebellion,

are sure sooner or later to arise. God must be recognized as the Head of the family if the family is to have any chance of peace. We cannot possibly do our duty as masters, unless possessed with the abiding consciousness of ourselves having a Master.

“Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”

Masters should ascertain whether or not their servants have Bibles and Prayer Books, and other religious books. We frequently take too much for granted. If our servants are quite young, and have not yet been confirmed, we should find out whether they are well-acquainted with the catechism of our Church. In one of the rubrics at the end of the catechism, you will find that masters and dames are directed to send their servants and apprentices, who have not learned their catechism, to the Curate of the parish to be instructed in it. It would be well were this rule more strictly carried out.

And do not suppose for one moment, from anything I have said, that masters and mistresses are to be weakly over-indulgent to their servants, never to reprimand or to correct them. Not so; in a Christian family discipline must be maintained. Servants are not to be allowed to

do just what is right in their own eyes. St. Paul instructed Timothy that no one was fitted for the ministry, who knew not how to rule well his own house. There must be discipline. A master must impress upon his servants and all whom he employs, that there must be obedience. This is the first lesson he must teach them. He will however use as his rod love rather than fear.

His authority over them will be best built up on self-abnegation, and in kind thoughts, and words, and deeds towards them. A loving heart will ever draw others to it. The servants of such a one will find themselves constrained to obey.

Masters, have you failed in your duties to your servants? Have you oppressed the hireling in his wages? A heavy woe is pronounced by God, through the mouth of Malachi on such, "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages."

Have you neglected to inquire into any complaint of a member of your household? "If," says righteous Job, "I did despise the cause of my manservant, or of my maidservant, when they contended with me, what then shall I do when God riseth up, and when He visiteth, what shall I answer Him?"

"Have you been," to use the words of the

Apocrypha, "as a lion among your servants?" If so, repent and amend your sinful ways. Seek through Jesus the pardon of these sins. You have a Master to whom you must soon give in an account. As you deal with your servants, so will He deal with you. It is written, in the Epistle of St. James, "he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy;" and, in the Gospel, "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Great are necessarily, oftentimes, the difficulties and trials of servants. In large households those who have hitherto been entire strangers to one another find themselves suddenly thrown together as one family: various tempers and dispositions are brought into close contact. Yet each servant is, in a measure, isolated. There are no ties of blood or of affinity: each one stands alone. Pity your servants; feel for them; show sympathy with them. By deeds prove to them that their welfare is near your heart.

Remember ever thy own Master, and in how short a time thou wilt come into His presence; and then thou wilt not go far wrong in the treatment of thy servants.

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